

California's Driving-Under-the-Influence Program: the Most Frequently Asked Questions

What is California doing to address the problem of drinking and driving?

State law requires that a person convicted of DUI be referred to a State-licensed DUI program. The program must successfully be completed before a driver's license is restored.

How does a DUI Program reduce DUI behavior?

A combination of alcohol and drug education and counseling activities helps participants face their unacceptable behavior, determine the level of their involvement with alcohol or drugs, learn alternative ways to deal with alcohol or drugs, and be made aware of the consequences of continued alcohol or drug use, particularly while driving a motor vehicle.

Do these programs really work?

A recent study (Peck, R. C., The General and Specific Deterrent Effects of DUI Sanctions, 1991) by the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) concludes that DUI programs are effective in reducing repeated occurrences of DUI. DMV is currently conducting a five-year study to further evaluate the effectiveness of all types of DUI programs in California.

What types of DUI Programs are there?

California has three alcohol and drug education and counseling programs for individuals who have had a DUI offense—a three-month first offender program, an

18-month program for second or subsequent offenders and a 30-month program for third and subsequent offenders. Thirty-month DUI program services are available in Los Angeles and San Francisco Counties. In Fiscal Year 1997-98, 125,831 people enrolled in DUI programs—92,326 people enrolled in first offender programs, 33,379 in 18-month programs, and 126 in 30-month programs.

How much does it cost to participate in these programs?

The cost for participation in a DUI program varies depending upon program location, economic factors and a participant's ability to pay. In May 1998, the average cost was:

first offender program \$400

18-month program \$1,200

30-month program \$2,300

Though it has been the intent of the Legislature that the programs be self-supporting through participant fees, no program participant can be denied services due to the inability to pay the fee.

What is the cost to the California taxpayer?

There is no cost to the taxpayer since participants pay fees which support the cost of the program including the administrative costs of county and State oversight efforts.